CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1547
12 August 1998

Original: ENGLISH

DECISION

on the establishment of an ad hoc committee under item 1 of the agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament"

The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", an ad hoc committee which shall negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The Ad Hoc Committee shall present a report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work before the conclusion of the 1998 session.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1548
12 August 1998

Original: ENGLISH

STATEMENT

made by the President following the adoption of decision CD/1547 on the establishment of an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1 entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament"

In connection with the decision we have just taken, I should like, in my capacity as President of the Conference, to state that the adoption of this decision is without prejudice to any further decisions on the establishment of further subsidiary bodies under agenda item 1 which may result from the provisions of paragraph 1 of decision CD/1501, and that the presidency will continue to pursue intensive consultations and to seek the views of the members of the Conference on appropriate methods and approaches for dealing with agenda item 1, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", taking into consideration all proposals and views in this respect.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1549
12 August 1998

Original: ENGLISH

STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 21

The G.21 emphasises that nuclear disarmament is the highest prioritiy for the Conference on Disarmament (CD). In order to promote the work of the CD, the group underscores its flexibility in accepting the proposal to establish an ad hoc committee under item 1 of the agenda - entitled « Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament » - to negotiate a convention on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices ». This gesture should be reciprocated by others through their agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, as well as during the course of the negotiations to be conducted in the ad hoc committee which we have just agreed to establish.

The group of 21 stresses the importance of the elimination of the possibility of nuclear war and the threats derived from the continued existence of nuclear weapons, and the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The group expresses its support for the President's declaration that in accordance with paragraph 1 of decision CD/1501, intensive consultations will continue with a view to reaching a decision on an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament. The group is of the view that these consultations should lead to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, and recalls the various proposals presented collectively and individually by its members.

The G.21 believes that the proposed treaty dealing with fissile material must constitute a nuclear disarmament measure, and not only a nuclear non-proliferation measure, and be an integral step leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The treaty shall also promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mindful that the achievement of nuclear disarmement requires urgent negotiation, the group emphazises the imperative need for all states to commit themselves unequivocally to the objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. An ad hoc committee should be established in the CD to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a nuclear weapons convention.

The G.21 believes firmly that a satisfactory solution to the issue of nuclear disarmament will have a direct bearing on the work of the CD in the future.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1550
12 August 1998

Original: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 12 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRIA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A PRESS STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WOLFGANG SCHUSSEL IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ON THE DECISION OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TO ESTABLISH AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO NEGOTIATE A TREATY BANNING THE PRODUCTION OF FISSILE MATERIAL USED IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS ISSUED IN VIENNA ON 11 AUGUST 1998

I have the honor to transmit in the annex the text of a press statement by the Austrian Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schüssel in his capacity as President of the Council of the European Union on the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material used in nuclear weapons, issued in Vienna on 11 August 1998.

I should be grateful if the text could be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Harald Kreid
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Press statement by the Austrian Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schüssel

Foreign Minister Schuessel, in his capacity as President of the Council of the European Union, welcomes the decision taken today by the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva to establish an Ad Hoc Committee and to start negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices (Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty - FMCT).

With the launching of the negotiations on a FMCT, the realisation of the next logical step after the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996 on the road towards nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is within reach. Since the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference when agreement on this objective was achieved, the European Union has steadfastly supported the commencement of such negotiations in the CD. The decision taken by the CD today was based on a proposal which Austria had made earlier this year.

We have frequently reiterated the importance of such a treaty which will cap the fissile material stockpiles available for use in nuclear weapons and strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime by adding new constraints, including verification arrangements on all relevant facilities. It will thus constitute a significant contribution towards the achievement of both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

In view of the recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, the consensus decision to start negotiations comes at a crucial moment.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1551
18 August 1998

Original: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 14 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE HON. DOMINGO L. SIAZON, ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO NEGOTIATE A TREATY BANNING THE PRODUCTION OF FISSILE MATERIAL

I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement of the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Domingo L. Siazon, on the establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material.

It would be appreciated if the statement could be circulated as an official document of the Conference.

(Signed) Lilia R. Bautista
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

GE.98-63185

Press Statement of the Hon. Domingo L. Siazon,
Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines,
on the Decision to Establish an Ad Hoc Committee
to Negotiate a Treaty Banning Production of Fissile Material
for Nuclear Weapons or other Nuclear Explosive

The Philippines welcomes the consensus reached in the Conference on Disarmament to establish an Ad Hoc Committee as a critical first step leading to negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive. Coming shortly after the series of nuclear testing in South Asia, the decision adopted by the Conference on Disarmanent provides hope that the cause of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmanent can advance as we move towards the new millennium.

The negotiations on the ban on fissile material will be the most important negotiation since the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Philippines sincerely hopes that procedural matters can be agreed upon as soon as possible to immediately begin negotiation. While the Philippines looks forward to early conclusion of a convention on fissile materials, it is under no illusion that negotiations will be short and easy. The decision to create an ad hoc committee required a great amount of political will, particularly from countries whose security interests are closely linked to nuclear issues, before a consensus was reached. We realize that an even greater amount of political will be needed to successfully negotiate and conclude a convention. Nevertheless, given the high degree of flexibility demonstrated by states in adopting the decision on the ad hoc committee, there is reason to be optimistic that the momentum it has generated will carry the negotiations to a successful conclusion.

13 August 1998